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# A WORD ABOUT TURKEY AND HER ALLIES.

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## CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY, physical and political, is a subject which in all times has attracted the attention of thoughtful men, more especially of those who, owing to social conditions, have been placed in the position of legislators and administrators. Those natural barriers of mountains, rivers, seas, and oceans by which Nature has separated some countries from others, and the political divisions by which circumstances dependent on the will of man have drawn a line of demarcation between one kingdom and another, deserve at the present day more grave consideration, especially on the part of Englishmen, than was ever the case before. In the England of to-day every man is a politician ; he belongs to a political party, and he studies and supports the newspaper that represents his opinions. He will even read the opposition journals, either to strengthen his belief in his own political creed, or to seek an opportunity of refuting what he deems the errors of those

who differ from him. Nay, more; reverencing that freedom of speech which is represented and guarded by the Press, the Englishman of to-day may take up his pen, and addressing the editor of a journal that advocates the political opinions he follows, or even the editor of an opposition journal, his letter will in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred find a place in the columns of the newspaper addressed. Or he may attend a public meeting, and there express his opinions orally; or he may content himself with expressing his assent to opinions uttered by some speakers, or his dissent from those expressed by others. In short, the Englishman of the nineteenth century enjoys, or rather possesses, more political liberty than the native of any other country on earth. I advisedly say *possesses*, but he seldom *enjoys* his privileges in the sense of exercising them. It is only after some terrible blunder has been made by his rulers that the Englishman raises his voice and asserts his rights as a free citizen. But to denounce faulty administration which has entailed irremediable evils, is but a poor satisfaction to those upon whom the evil has fallen. Denunciations pronounced in the strongest language cannot repair the mischief that has been done. An awakening, a thorough rousing of public opinion, may serve as a warning to ministers, and may be the means of averting

in the future calamities similar to those which have excited national indignation.

At the present moment, when the rose of England is bathed in the blood of an English hero, and trampled under foot in the sands of the African desert, it may not be amiss for Englishmen to look steadily on the map of Europe, and taking a lesson in geography, physical and political, endeavour to form a correct idea of the relations existing between their country and the Powers of the European continent.

In order to appreciate these international relations, it will be well to examine the condition and aspect of each individual state with which England is brought most nearly into political contact.

Let us first cast a glance on Russia, that giant empire which covers the entire north of Asia from the Caucasian Range to the Pacific Ocean, and which occupies the north of Europe from the Baltic Sea to the Ural Mountains. What is the internal political condition of these vast territories over which the Czar rules? Need the most ordinary newspaper reader be told? The spirit of Nihilism enwraps Russia even as an encompassing atmosphere, and permeates every social grade of the empire. In the ranks of the Nihilist brotherhood are to be found Russians

of every rank, from the highest noble down to the humblest citizen and the hard-worked serf. Nay, more; in the ranks of the Nihilists are to be found youthful maidens as well as bearded men. The entire Muscovite social system is permeated by a fearful political force, which works in every direction; at one moment striking down the highest placed on the social edifice, at another engulfing the humblest.

This fearful political epidemic has inoculated, so to speak, Russians of both sexes and of every age and rank, and having entered into the blood is propagated from father to son, from mother to daughter, like to those contagious maladies which once introduced into a country are seldom thoroughly eradicated, the germs remaining latent to reappear when favouring circumstances arise. If needful reforms, thorough and complete, are not originated and carried into operation by the governing authorities in Russia, they will inevitably burst upwards from the foundations of the social structure, and with seismic force will scatter ruin and devastation, regardless of order and unobservant of rule.

But though Russia is thus shaken internally by Nihilism she still undeviatingly pursues her traditional foreign policy of extension, whether by annexation or by conquest. That policy, which though initiated by the

predecessors of Peter I., received from that monarch its first great impulse, has been steadily carried out by each succeeding occupant, whether male or female, of the throne of Russia. Indeed, so uniform has been Russia's course of action in regard to the extension of her dominions, that believers in the metempsychosis might say that the soul of Peter the Great has continued to animate each of his successors.

And thus we find the Russia of to-day carrying out the foreign policy inaugurated more than two centuries ago by the great monarch who may well be reputed the founder of the Russian empire. And so Russia advances cautiously and steadily towards the object she has in view, retiring before repulse, but retiring only to return to the pathway from which she has been driven, at a period more or less remote according to the opportunities that present themselves; advancing with giant strides where impediments do not exist, and stealing onwards with lynx-like watchfulness where she apprehends observation. Russia has known how to profit by the supineness of England, and keeps her eyes ever open to her Indian interests. "Emperor of Central Asia" would form a well-sounding addition to the titles of the Czar of all the Russias, and would counterbalance, phonetically, the title of "Empress of India," assumed by the Queen of England in virtue of her Indian dominions.

The Crimean war has passed into the regions of history, but that war was a tentative at the realisation of the grand aim of an ancient hereditary Russian policy. When Catherine II. named her second grandson Constantine, when she surrounded him with Greek attendants, and had him instructed by Greek professors, she was preparing a way, as she thought, to place a Russian prince on the throne once occupied by the Emperor Constantine. And when the Semiramis of the North, by the instrumentality of Potemkin, acquired possession of the Crimean peninsula, she was working her way towards Constantinople. She did not expect to reach the goal herself, but she, who had become inoculated with the Russian spirit of patient onwardness, was satisfied to transmit to her successors the task of creeping a few more paces forward towards the desired terminus. And when Catherine uttered what Burke termed a "royal syllogism," to explain why and how she had become mistress of the Crimean peninsula, she gave *veiled* expression to the policy of which she was an exponent, and the perfected development of which would crown a Russian prince emperor in Constantinople.

It is incontestable that had the Emperor Nicholas at the commencement of the Crimean war possessed railway

communication with the southern portions of his European dominions, the result of the conflict might have been other than it was. England by her blundering in that war lost the *prestige* which up to that time she had enjoyed amongst the nations of Europe; and Russia, though *nominally* defeated, had exhibited in the warfare resources which augmented her importance as a great military power. England blundered egregiously in the mode in which she played her part in the Crimean war, and it must be honestly confessed that the checks suffered by Russia were inflicted by France. Napoleon III. was a powerful ally for England on that occasion. How she repaid his services it is not at present needful to inquire; but had England entered single-handed in that contest, it is scarcely probable that history would have had to record the brilliant pyrotechnic display that delighted the eyes of Londoners on the occasion of the signing of the peace that followed the termination of the Crimean war.

Checked in her great effort to reach Constantinople, Russia, with what could not be termed a bad grace, turned her steps towards Asia, and there continued her eastward progress. Nothing is more noteworthy in history than the mode in which Russia has won her way through the regions north of the Himalayan Range even to the Pacific



Ocean. But Russia, whilst advancing eastward, ever cherishes southern longings in Asia as in Europe. Does she hanker after British India? Who can say? Certain it is she is advancing with feline stealthiness in a south-eastern direction in Asia. When interrogated as to her intentions she always answers softly, alleges a reasonable pretext, and when she has succeeded to lull suspicion, she resumes her game of spoliation. It is ever the voice of Jacob but the hand of Esau.

The present time is highly favourable to the designs of Russia in Asia. England is unpleasantly entangled in the Soudan, and Russia may reasonably hope for a fresh diplomatic triumph in her negotiations with Afghanistan. The Muscovite policy is always uniformly the same. In her advances towards Herat, she has always answered civilly, but it must be said, at *her own good leisure*, the inquiries made by England as to the object she had in view; and the nearer she approaches her desired goal, the more vague becomes her replies to "inquiring friends." As soon as she will have reached the proper distance, then will she spring upon her prey. An excuse will not be wanted for interference. Some mischievous Englishman had attacked an unoffending Afghan, or a ferocious Afghan had assaulted an innocent Englishman, and Russian interference was

needed to prevent general slaughter. A plausible pretext will be found in explanation of the encounter; or, should Russia feel herself very strong, she may, using a conqueror's right, refuse any explanation beyond, "Here I am and here will I remain." Even whilst these lines are being penned, Russia may have taken possession of Herat, may have succeeded in winning the Ameer to join with her, and may be preparing to try conclusions with an Anglo-Indian army.

But there may be a reverse to the medal. Russia may not succeed in winning the Ameer to her side, an Anglo-Indian army may arrive in time to intimidate the advancing foe; and what will Russia do in such circumstances? She will stop short, perhaps fall back on the nearest favourable post, and wait another opportunity to make a fresh attempt to attain the object of her wishes. To suppose that Russia ever wholly relinquishes a project of conquest once maturely decided on, would be to suppose that Russia had abandoned the steady, persevering, persistent policy to which she owes her greatness.\*

\* These lines were written before the Russian troops had advanced on Pendjeh. To arrogate to one's self the virtue of prophecy in making a prediction with regard to the course of Russian policy would be as silly as to claim a reward for declaring that the sun would rise at a certain hour on a day named. According to the laws of probability the sun will rise with his wonted punctuality on any day we may choose to name, and judging the future by the past, Russia will continue to advance in Asia.

## CHAPTER II.

I do not pretend to write a political essay ; I merely propose to note down what I have seen and heard during my travels in various countries of Europe. An Englishwoman residing abroad, and having opportunities of learning the opinions of some of the best-informed foreign personages, has chances of correcting many home-formed prejudices. Far from me the vanity of pretending to enunciate new political doctrines. I only state facts, and, if I draw conclusions, I flatter myself that they are deduced naturally from the premises laid down.

It is not pleasant to see one's country falling in the scale of nations, and what I now say may perchance have the effect of modifying if not of altogether changing the ideas of some of my fellow-countrywomen and fellow-countrymen upon certain points regarding the estimation in which England is now held in countries where at one time her reputation for moral integrity was as high as was the admiration she inspired as a Great Power, both naval and military.

Let us give a glance at the actual condition of England,

both with regard to her domestic condition and to her foreign policy, and let us then endeavour to form an unprejudiced opinion on the estimation in which England is held by foreign Powers. Firstly, in England hundreds of unemployed mechanics are calling aloud for work, and calling for work means craving for bread for themselves and their families. With what sentiments can these men view the prospect of a war with Russia, in addition to the slaughter now raging in the Soudan !

Mr. Gladstone, with characteristic recklessness, is ready to squander £40,000,000 of British money and to shed torrents of British blood to obtain—what ? A sack of African sand ? For no more profitable or substantial result will ever accrue from the Soudan war. And from the Russo-Afghan war ? Well, England would have to contend there with a moral force, akin to that with which she is in conflict in the Soudan. Russia has a fanatical belief in the divinity of her mission in Asia. I am far from pretending to say that she is not on that account to be opposed in her depredatory advances ; I only speak of the *spirit* that actuates Russian encroachments in Asia. It is not perhaps so strongly fanatical as is the credence that animates the followers of the Mahdi, but it exists, and will carry to the limits of the proposed bourne each succeeding Russian Government, and each individual

Russian soldier engaged in the planning or the execution of these Asiatic campaigns.

But let us return to England. Is she in a condition to sustain a war in Central Asia, in addition to the slaughter already committed, and still being committed, in the Soudan? In England trade is depressed, a large portion of the working population is thrown out of work, and the rent-rolls of the landed proprietors present in each returning year a lower figure than was marked at the close of the preceding twelve months. War means additional taxation, and is the British nation in a condition to pay fresh taxes? Let each individual householder and landed proprietor answer that question according to the state of his purse. The money of British taxpayers and the blood of British soldiers may be of little value in the estimation of the Gladstone Ministry, but the money wrung from the hard hands of working men, and the bloodshed that creates widows, and orphans, and brotherless sisters, may suggest to the consideration of the nation interests overlooked by Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues.

England has often rendered herself conspicuous by interference in the affairs of other countries, under pretext of settling their disagreements. Before volunteering to play the part of pacificator in her neighbours' troubles, it would be well that England should be able to point to her own

dominions as representing a model of good government. But can she do so? A glance at the condition of Ireland will furnish an unanswerable reply. Is there in Europe—nay, we may ask is there on earth, a country that presents a more painful picture of the effects of unjust legislation?

Ireland by her geographical position might have become, in fact ought to have been, the right arm of England. The fertility of her soil, combined with her many natural advantages in water-power and commodious harbours, might, if wisely utilised, have rendered her one of the great commercial centres of the British Empire; whilst the military spirit always conspicuous in young Irishmen might have made Ireland the great nursery of the British army. But what aspect does Ireland present to-day? Instead of being a helpmate to England, she has become her terror. What an army of police and of regular soldiers is maintained in Ireland by England! And for what purpose? To keep in subjection the people of the sister island—an island which is reputed to be *united* to Great Britain.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland presents a condition of union not unlike those matrimonial unions which Sir James Hannen is so often called on to sever *legally*, but which, morally or immorally, have been *virtually* dissolved long before the contending parties had

presented themselves before a court of law. Did a political divorce-court exist, who can doubt that Ireland would appear there as a plaintiff !

It is noteworthy that Lord Dufferin, the diplomatist universally recognised as the most competent to extricate England from her present Indian embarrassments, is the lineal descendant of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who of all the men of his time denounced the most eloquently the injustices committed in India under English rule, and who, on the occasion of the arraignment of Warren Hastings, the arch-agent of these injustices, pronounced an oration which, in the opinion of persons competent to judge, entitles the Irish orator to rank on a line with Demosthenes.

Nor let it be forgotten that Lord Wolseley, "England's only general" of to-day, is an Irishman, as was Wellington, England's most successful general of seventy years ago.

It must not be supposed that the political condition of Ireland escapes the notice of thoughtful foreigners. One of the mortifications that an Englishwoman residing in foreign lands has to endure is to hear the state of Ireland pointed at as an exhaustive commentary on the blessings of English rule.

A Turkish official of high rank, dining at my table some little time since, made a remark that struck me forcibly. The conversation had turned on the general political condition of Europe. Somebody mentioned Ireland. "Ah!" said the Pasha, shrugging his shoulders with an expression of pain, "that story has become too sad; I read no newspaper article that alludes to it."

"I cannot understand," said another Turkish official, "how England, who proclaims herself the champion of liberty abroad, should be so tyrannical to her own people."

"I have just returned from Cyprus," said another, "and I can assure you English rule is far from being popular there. The Cypriotes would be glad to be back under the Sultan's sway."

I made no remark. I was in possession of abundant private information which corresponded with the opinion expressed by the Pasha.



## CHAPTER III.

It is pretty plain that England's most dangerous enemy is Ireland. The United Kingdom of Great Britain offers the distressing picture of a house divided against itself. The malady has become chronic. It would be rash to utter a hope of amelioration for the condition of Ireland. Centuries of misrule have brought forth their natural bitter fruit.

As an Englishwoman, I tremble each time that I undo the wrapper of the *Times* or the *Morning Post*, dreading to find in the columns of these journals an announcement of the destruction or defacement of some noble London monument by the action of dynamiters. When the emotions caused by apprehension or indignation have subsided, how often have I shaken my head in recognition of the sad truths, that those who sow the wind must reap the whirlwind, and that those who plant brambles must not expect to reap grapes therefrom!

And what judgment will future historians pronounce upon Irish-American dynamiters? They will find in the action of these men the outcome of the vindictive hereditary hate of people whose ancestors were driven from house and home by the pressure of penal laws which offered them the choice

of renouncing their religious faith or of being deprived of their worldly goods. Historians will see in dynamite aggressions the war of the oppressed against the oppressor, of the down-trodden subject against the dishonest legislator; they will describe these dynamite atrocities as a fearful retribution, wrought by a people maddened to crime against rulers who had long given to them and to their fathers an example of the worst injustice.

Future historians may explain without being able to justify the proceedings of the dynamiters of the nineteenth century, but we English people of to-day are suffering for the legislative crimes of our forefathers, and which our present law-makers do not honestly seek to remedy. We English people of to-day, awakened from our ignorance, and forced to cast aside our insular prejudices, are compelled to recognise as our most implacable foes those who but for English injustice would be our firmest friends and allies.

It was wise, some persons will perhaps say cunning, on the part of Mr. Gladstone to contrive a visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Ireland. The personal qualities of the Prince, his sympathetic and kindly nature, together with the well-known amiability of the Princess, have secured for their Royal Highnesses a friendly reception in Ireland. But the Irish are not fools. They do not expect

to reap any material advantage from the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and for that very reason the warm reception accorded to them in Ireland is all the more flattering, being a tribute to the personal qualities of their Royal Highnesses. On the other hand, those who contrived the Royal visit must have reckoned—and correctly, be it said—on the abundant goodness of the Irish heart, with its hospitable impulses and its courteous kindness. The Irish people will not gain, they could not expect to gain, anything from this visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales, but they are amiable enough, or weak enough, to be flattered by an exhibition of kindness on the part of two members of the royal family of England. Would it be vain to express a hope that our short-sighted English legislators may be able to deduce a correct inference from these facts, and to *act* honestly on the same? The Irish of to-day may appropriately quote the words of their poet—

“There never were hearts, *if our rulers would let them,*  
More formed to be happy and blest than ours.”

The visit of George IV. to Ireland was supposed to have a political object, though it may have been only meant to soften down the asperities of public opinion so strongly excited by the death, following on the trial, of the unfortunate Queen Caroline. Be that as it may, George IV. paid

a visit to Ireland "ere the daughter of Brunswick was cold in her grave," and met a cordial reception in Dublin. It is true that Byron expressed strong contempt for the conduct of the Irish on that occasion, despising as he said, "a nation so servile though sore," and which "though trampled like the worm, did not turn upon power," but no just comparison could be made between George IV. and our Prince of Wales. Though the sufferings of Ireland have been intensified during late years, and though the over-excited zeal of certain Irish-Americans has tended to put the United—I ought to say *Disunited*—Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland on a level with Nihilistic Russia, still the fact remains that the reception given in Ireland to the Prince and Princess of Wales was due to the *personal* qualities of these royal personages. Mr. Gladstone can make no political capital out of that visit. It only proves the inherent kindly disposition of the Irish people.

Somebody has said that the Englishman's political Bible is the *Times*. I do not seek to gainsay the assertion, but this I do say, that when an emergency arises, our leading journal knows how to speak wisely and well.

The following extract taken from a leading article in the *Times* of April, 1885, deserves attention from those who pretend to govern Ireland.

“It is not, however, by royal visits, though these have their place and effect, that the loyalty and good-will of the Irish people are to be recovered. In the work of conciliation the occasional presence of members of the royal family in Ireland may have a salutary effect, and the success of the present experiment may well encourage its repetition. To conciliation of this kind no political objection can possibly be taken, except by those who do not want to be reconciled, and on them conciliation of any kind is obviously thrown away. But Ireland needs good government, firm, fearless, and just, as well as conciliation, whether political or social. It would be well, perhaps, if on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Ireland, and in view of the salutary effect it may have on popular feeling, parties in England would agree to establish a truce on the exasperating Irish topic. It is not a topic on which either party can claim to be free from reproach, and probably as long as parties exist, each will be able to accuse the other of mismanagement and malversation in the conduct of its policy.”

The same article goes on to say :—

“A great deal has happened since Lord Beaconsfield dissolved Parliament in 1880 without taking any steps for averting those dangers and risks of which he warned the

country when it was too late, and for most that has happened, if not for all, *the present Government must be held responsible*. But there is not much profit in recrimination of this kind. It is likely enough that Lord Beaconsfield refrained, for political reasons, from renewing or amending the Peace Preservation Act in the face of a general election ; and it may be taken for granted, *that for reasons of a similar kind*, the present Government allowed the Act to lapse without taking any steps to replace it. This, indeed, is the *inherent and almost incorrigible vice of the government of Ireland by English parties*. Party considerations are too often allowed to take precedence of the paramount necessities of good government in Ireland. The reproach is an old one, and too often a just one, and we can only hope that it will not be once more applicable to the case of the renewal of the Crimes Act. We may conciliate Ireland in time by good and firm government. . . . . But no conciliation will be permanent, and no good and firm government will be possible, as long as each party in turn treats Ireland as merely a piece to be played in the game of party tactics."

Neither the internal condition of Russia nor of England is what a philanthropist would wish to contemplate. Honeycombed, so to speak, by Nihilism, and sorely pressed

by pecuniary difficulties, Russia is carrying out her Asiatic policy at considerable disadvantage. England, kept in a state of constant terror by dynamiters, and obliged to hold Ireland down by the iron hand of military possession, is recruiting and concentrating her warlike resources in order to counteract the operations of her great Muscovite foe, whose advances towards British India cause her great alarm. Between the western frontier of British India and Russian possessions in Asia lies Afghanistan. The Ameer of this country is the ally of England, and is said to be most kindly disposed towards us. One proof of his willingness to enter into the views of his English allies is the cheerful alacrity with which, some two years since, he accepted a subsidy from his British allies of three millions per annum. If Abdurrahman has not expended this money after the fashion intended by his generous English allies, that is to say in fortifying his frontiers, he has at least, by means of this subsidy, increased his home or harem comforts. He has possibly bought a fresh draft of female slaves, with attendant eunuchs, and amid these surroundings the Ameer has been able to drink without stint in his favourite wines and spirits—and he has many—to the repletion of the English exchequer. This mode of expending the subsidy by the Ameer cannot be displeasing

to the donors, seeing that Abdurrahman's recent request for an increase of pay was immediately complied with. But, though Abdurrahman has given such unmistakeable proofs of sympathy with English gold, those who know the Afghans will refuse to believe that the Ameer entertains like sympathy for the English people, especially for the military portion of the nation. Indeed, it is believed by old Indian residents that Afghan proclivities tend towards Russia rather than towards England. Besides, it is undeniable that Muscovites assimilate with the habits, manners, and turn of thought of Asiatic peoples with a facility not possessed by English people.

Having said something about the contending interests of Russia and England, I shall venture a few words about the two great central kingdoms of Europe. Geographical position, and on many points identity of interests, point to an alliance between Germany and Austria as an inevitable result of political and commercial considerations. In view of a war between Russia and England, the neutrality of Germany and Austria would be of vital importance to Europe. Should France join Russia, she could send a contingent of troops into the Czar's dominions as quickly as England could despatch armaments to India, supposing that her Indian army needed reinforcements;



but on the other hand, should Germany or Austria make an alliance with England, it is doubtful whether either could offer her material aid. The two great central European States would naturally prefer to remain neutral should a conflict occur in Asia on the Afghan frontier, and for the simple reason that they have no interests in those regions, but both have interests in Europe. Austria would like Salonica, Germany would like to have the free use of Trieste. Farther than this one does not care to go at present. Germany, like Russia, thirsts for sea-room, and Prince Bismarck's colonial projects are too well known to need comment. Meanwhile, this extraordinary man sits like justice—but with unbandaged eyes—holding the scales, into one of which he will throw his influence according to the turn affairs may take on the Afghan frontier. Prince Bismarck is unquestionably the most remarkable figure in the political world of to-day. If unostentatious in his ordinary movements, he proved in his recent verbal tilting with Lord Granville that he is a master in the use of keenest satire. Born on the 1st of April, it has been said of him that he possesses the art of making April fools of all his opponents.

When great states assume an antagonistic attitude towards one another, little states rise in importance according to their geographical position, or any local advantage they

may possess. So Italy is likely to make good terms with England, and Austria is showing to Greece attentions not a little flattering to Hellenic self-love. On the other hand, little Denmark has taken alarm. Guardian of the entrance to the Baltic, she knows not on which side she may be attacked; besides, she has a historic knowledge of her fleet having been once destroyed by her English allies.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

THE position of Turkey with regard to the great powers of Europe is, to say the least of it, peculiar. The Crimean war showed England as Turkey's great defender against Russian aggression. The sincerity of England's friendship for Turkey has since then been abundantly proved by the bombardment of Alexandria, and the occupation of Egypt. And there are Turks, grave and sagacious men, who believe that England is as ready—did circumstances permit—to force the Dardanelles as she was to bombard Alexandria.

England and Russia are unquestionably Turkey's most powerful and most dangerous enemies. In a moral sense Russia appears to greater advantage than England in her

attitude towards Turkey, because since the time of the Czar Nicholas's famous personification of Turkey as the "sick man," Russia has been looked upon as the avowed enemy of Turkey, whilst England, though assuming the title of friend, has inflicted on the Sultan more serious injuries than did his declared enemy.

Voltaire drawing a contrast between Richelieu and Mazarin, said of the former that he was a powerful enemy, of the latter that he was a dangerous friend. Turkey may well say the like of two of her *soi-disant* friends, putting Russia in the place of Richelieu and England in the place of Mazarin.

Apart from the openly hostile acts of bombarding a city or seizing a province, it may not be without profit to contemplate the conduct of England and other European powers towards Turkey in minor matters. The necessity of reforms in Turkey has long been a favourite theme of Turkey's political friends and allies; economy has been preached as a saving faith, yet it is laughable to observe how practice contradicts theory when advisers fancy their own interests are being compromised. Let us take a case in point.

Everybody knows that the revenue arising from the Post Office forms no inconsiderable item in the moneys paid into the exchequer of Great Britain. It is so in every civilized country in the world, and such revenue

increases each year in proportion to the increased facilities of postal communication, and the wants of the now widely-diffused commercial and travelling populations of the world.

His Majesty, Abdul Hamid, having turned his attention to the fact that large sums which ought to be paid into his exchequer had long been finding their way into the pockets of the Austro-Hungarian, English, and other foreign Governments, announced his intention of establishing Turkish post offices throughout his empire, and of sending the Turkish mail *via Varna* to Western Europe. What uproar followed this decree of his Majesty! Had the Sultan put a capitation tax upon each individual member of the staff of every embassy in Constantinople, a greater outburst of indignation could not have arisen. However the Sultan carried his point, and Turkish post offices are, I am happy to say, flourishing.

In the post office question no private individual was more interested than myself. The establishment of a Turkish post has been to me, personally, of great advantage. I had had many cases of complaint against the foreign post offices squatted in Turkey; small parcels lost, delivery of letters long delayed, and after long delay sometimes presented torn, even *open*. The supineness and insolence exhibited by an official in the British post office,

Constantinople, had on one occasion forced me into a newspaper controversy, and I am happy to say that I—the aggrieved party—was able to prove incontestably that I was in the right. Since the establishment of Turkish post offices I have never trusted my correspondence—which is considerable—to the anti-national letter-carriers. I am happy to have an opportunity of offering my humble testimony to the capabilities—especially linguistic—exhibited by Turkish post office officials.

But even were it otherwise, were the Porte only making an infant essay in the establishment of a national post office, what could be thought of *friendly* Powers who would enter the lists to oppose this act of self-justification on the part of the Turkish Government; Powers too that were always foremost to preach economy to the Porte, and to condemn what they were in the habit of calling Turkish indolence, supineness, and extravagance?

And whence arose the indignation of the heads of foreign post offices in Turkey? I should say their indignation had its source in their pockets, into which had long been dropping money that ought to have found its way into the Turkish exchequer.

Persons acquainted with diplomatic life in Constantinople as it was thirty or forty years ago, are aware that some of

Abdul Hamid's predecessors were not only advised, but oftentimes bullied, by the ambassadors of certain European powers. However the present Sultan is of different stuff, and, wisely distrusting his allies and *soi-disant* friends, he will, when the occasion presents itself, assert his claims to what is lawfully his.

Another mode in which the Turkish exchequer has been defrauded by the political friends and allies of Turkey, is by abuse of the privileges accorded to ambassadors and consuls. These officials have been allowed to pass through the Turkish custom house goods of various kinds without paying duty. The following extract from the *Moniteur Oriental* of Constantinople will give an idea of how these fiscal frauds have been effected.

"By the last Marseilles steamer a case arrived at the Stamboul custom house addressed to an official of one of the embassies at Constantinople. Yesterday, a *cavass* of the said embassy was sent to the custom house to withdraw the case, and after the usual formalities in such instances, which however do not comprise the opening and examination of the contents of packages, the case was delivered to the *cavass*, with this precaution, however, that an officer was sent with it. On reaching Pera, this officer noticed that the case, by direction of the *cavass*, was not taken to the embassy to

which it was addressed, but to the private residence of the proprietor of a well-known *magasin de nouveautés*. Seeing this, the officer in charge thought it incumbent upon him to interfere, and ordered the case to be taken back to the custom house, where, on being opened, it was discovered that it contained a large quantity of lace of different qualities. A *procès-verbal* of the circumstances was drawn up at the custom house, and the matter, as well as the case, rest for the present there."

This individual case was used by the Turkish authorities as a key, so to speak, for unlocking and exposing a wide system of fiscal frauds, and which are estimated to have caused Turkey, during a long term of years, a large annual loss.

The ambassadors and higher officials of the ambassadorial staffs were in no way implicated in these doings. It was underlings at the different embassies who had created for themselves a system of perquisites by abusing the privileges accorded to their masters.

A radical remedy has, I understand, been found to prevent a repetition of such custom-house frauds as I have mentioned. I only allude to these facts in order to prove that his Majesty, Abdul Hamid, does not walk through the world with closed eyes.

But, turning from the record of minor wrongs and petty

thefts, let us cast a backward glance upon one of the "bloodiest pictures in the book of Time"—the desertion and betrayal of General Gordon in the Soudan by Mr. Gladstone and his ministerial colleagues. History offers no example of more heroic devotedness or of more chivalrous fidelity than is to be found in the conduct of Gordon. Too honest to doubt the sincerity of these "honourable men," the Gladstonian ministers, too courageous to suspect in others cowardice either moral or physical, General Gordon died a martyr to his faith in English honour.

Poor Gordon! He seems to have erred only on one point throughout his career, that was in putting trust in the Gladstone Government. Gordon is dead, not by the fault of the native pasha who betrayed him to the Mahdi, but by the culpable negligence of the ministers who refused to send troops to his aid. The cry raised, for party purposes, by the real criminals of revenging Gordon's death, a cry re-echoed by thousands of the unreflecting, may well make the judicious grieve. The armaments talked of for Khartoum, should such ever be organised, may appropriately be entitled "The Crocodile Expedition."

It is a pleasure to find that long before the catastrophe of Khartoum occurred, there were persons who foresaw that evil must result from the mode of conduct followed by



the English ministry. Amongst such I may claim a place.

On the 3rd of June, 1884, I published in the *Moniteur Oriental* of Constantinople, the following letter:—

*“To the Editor of the ‘Moniteur Oriental.’*

*“GORDON’S REAL MISSION.*

“SIR,—In your issue of the 23rd May I find a recapitulation of the instructions given by Lord Granville to General Gordon on his departure from England, and later on, on his departure from Cairo.

“Without wishing to enter into the political questions involved in the present condition of Egyptian affairs; without expressing, as thousands of English people have done, disapprobation of the high-handed measures by which England has attained her present control over the land of Egypt; without uttering one word of comment on the abandonment of General Gordon in Khartoum, I should like to ask an explanation of some of Lord Granville’s instructions to the man whose ‘chivalrous conduct,’ the Minister for Foreign Affairs says, is admired by the Cabinet of Queen Victoria.

“The object of his (Gordon’s) mission, says Lord Gran-

ville, was to effect the evacuation of the Soudan, and to bring back safe and sound, as far as possible, the Egyptian garrisons. He was to endeavour to attain these results by pacific means, recurring to force only in case of legitimate defence; and there was no question of complicating this operation by offensive measures either against the Mahdi, or by a violent repression of the insurrection.

"An analysis of these instructions leads to amusing reflections. General Gordon was to effect an evacuation of the Soudan and the delivery of the Egyptian garrisons by pacific means, and he was not to attempt any offensive measures either against the Mahdi or for the repression of the insurrection.

"It would be interesting to learn Lord Granville's ideas on a pacific mode of repressing rebellion in the Soudan. Would he advise General Gordon to invite the Mahdi to a picnic at the base of the Mountains of the Moon, where all differences might be amicably discussed? or would he suggest a tea-party at the cataracts of the Nile, where discords might be drowned in a cup of Bohea? I am, etc.,

"AN ENGLISH INQUIRER."

The letter I have cited evoked one from a correspondent of the journal in whose columns my first letter on the sub-

ject in question had appeared. In the issue of the *Moniteur Oriental* of the 10th June I published the following epistle:—

“MR. EDITOR,—Your correspondent ‘Cosmo’ has taken up the key-note of my letter on ‘General Gordon’s Real Mission.’ Lord Granville’s speeches and declarations on the subject, remind one of the feeble prattle of a doting old man, not cautious, not prudent, but nerveless. His energy has been frittered away in the unmeaning verbosity of the Circumlocution Office, and he now toddles along in red tape leading-strings, which to his enfeebled vision seem brilliant and safe-guiding as the reins of Apollo’s chariot. Oh for the days of Lord Palmerston, when an Englishman or an English employé travelled boldly through the East, and discharged the mission confided to him with courage and confidence, knowing that the Foreign Minister of those days would have sent a fleet or an army, as the needs of the case required, to protect the liberty of the humblest Englishman! The ‘*Romanus sum*’ was to the Briton of those times both a passport and a shield, both sword and buckler.

“England has fallen upon gloomy days. In the hands of a *fainéant* Government she loses her *prestige* amongst the nations and brings a blush to the cheeks of every English-

man who is not red-tape tied. It is, however, a pleasure to see that private individuals are now offering to do what the vacillating Gladstone Government ought to have done. But have we not too much reason to fear that the aid thus generously offered may arrive too late, and that even should the *fainéant* Gladstone Government be at length goaded into sending troops to the aid of General Gordon, our soldiers will only perchance arrive in time to assist at the obsequies of a brave man betrayed by his too great confidence in *now* mis-governed England?

"If, in my last letter to the *Moniteur Oriental*, I seemed to treat the question of General Gordon's abandonment in a spirit of sarcastic levity, I only wrote in the mortified spirit of one who feels the hopelessness of contending with imbecility. I am, Mr. Editor, &c.,

"AN ENGLISH INQUIRER."

The occupation of Egypt by England and the advance of Russia through Central Asia, are—so to speak—only side winds, by means of which each of these Powers hopes some day to reach Constantinople and—to remain permanently fixed there. The question between these two Powers is which will reach Stamboul first. But other competitors may enter into the arena. The Emperor of Germany and Prince

Bismarck may have something to say on the subject. Meanwhile, in what position does his Majesty, Abdul Hamid, find himself? Viewed from one point, his safety is secured by the strength and mutual antagonism of his enemies—that is to say, of his *soi-disant* friends and allies. Russia, England, and Germany so nearly counterbalance one another in force that neither will allow the other to snatch the prize upon which the eyes of all are fixed. The wise man has said there is safety in a multitude of counsellors; Turkey's safety seems to consist in the multitude and strength of her enemies. The position of Turkey at the present moment reminds one of an anecdote familiar to all—that of a traveller riding along the bank of a river in a desert land, and who suddenly perceived emerging from the waters on his left hand a gigantic crocodile, whilst in the thick brushwood on his right glistened the eyes of a tiger. Startled by the two forms of death that lay in his pathway, the traveller checked his horse, but the next moment, recovering his presence of mind, he plunged his spurs into the animal's sides, whereupon the horse made a bound forward, clearing a considerable space of ground. The tiger, who had not foreseen this feat of horsemanship, made a spring for the point at which he had calculated to seize his prey, but instead of catching either horse or rider, he fell into the yawning jaws of the crocodile; and the traveller, as the

story goes, continued his way, leaving his enemies to fight out their deadly battle.

Putting aside allegorical illustrations, let us return to plain facts. My object in writing this pamphlet was to say a word about Turkey and her allies. From the review made in the preceding pages, it is clear that Turkey's chief allies are her most dangerous enemies, and that, for the moment at least, her safety lies in the jealous animosity with which they watch one another's movements. Meanwhile, the Sultan looks calmly on, maintaining an attitude of neutrality which does honour to his sagacity. His Majesty, Abdul Hamid, knows that he holds in his hand a great trump card, which, should he be compelled to play down, Europe, Asia, and Africa, the whole Eastern Hemisphere, will be immediately involved in all the horrors of a religious war. Should the Sultan be compelled to assert his rights as Caliph, should he summon all Mahommedans to rally round his standard, who could answer for the consequences? Let us only think of the millions of Mahommedans inhabiting Asia, of the countless hordes living in Africa, of the not inconsiderable number abiding in Europe, and let us picture to ourselves all these peoples inflamed with religious zeal, and ready to face death in obedience to their Caliph's commands. And with what war-cries could they

not advance to the battle-field ! Without going back to the black deeds of Olive and Hastings, the Mahommedans of to-day can cite, as events of their own times, the bombardment of Alexandria, the entanglements in Egypt, and the invasion of the Soudan, where the Sultan's Christian allies, after ignoring his Majesty's sovereign rights, have made a mess which they cannot clear up, and which they would now willingly transfer to the Sultan to be settled in some fashion or another.

Let it not be supposed that these ideas or apprehensions originate with me. They do not. These opinions are entertained by numbers of Mussulmans, thoughtful men, who can read the signs of the times.

Some short while ago I was conversing with a Mussulman of high social position. We talked of English settlements on the shores of the Red Sea. "England," said the Turkish gentleman, "is strengthening herself on one bank of the Red Sea, but she seems to forget that beyond the opposite shore live millions of Mahommedans who would not turn a deaf ear to a cry for aid uttered by their co-religionists in Africa."

I remained silent, whilst my visitor went on expatiating on his text in a manner that showed he had thought the subject over long and attentively.

But should Turkey not adopt the terrible measure of redressing her wrongs by unfurling the standard of Islamism, she ought naturally to seek an augmentation of strength by forming an alliance with some Power whose interests are identical with hers. Amongst the Great Powers none such exists. These leviathan states only wait an opportunity to profit by any embarrassments into which Turkey may fall, to dismember in the first instance, and finally to engulf her. Greece is the only state in Europe whose interests are identical with those of Turkey.

In December, 1884, I published in the *Moniteur Oriental* of Constantinople some observations on the subject of an alliance between Turkey and Greece, which I reproduce here:—

“A monarch deliberating on the selection of political or commercial allies is pretty much in the same position as a man who is reflecting seriously on the choice of a matrimonial connection. Many attractions are required in the spouse, and many qualities in the ally. The genealogical antecedents of the one and the historical procedures of the other demand attentive consideration. A matrimonial engagement thoughtlessly contracted often entails the painful details of a legal divorce, and a political alliance formed



without due consideration too often provokes wounded susceptibilities, strained political relations, and not unfrequently disastrous wars.

“It is axiomatic that the formation of political alliances on the part of sovereigns and nations demands mature reflection. Such alliances may be of a purely warlike character, made between two or more Powers called upon either to resist an invading force or to prepare for an apprehended attack. Or such alliances may be established on a wider base, and made between two nations that seek mutual assistance not alone to meet the wants of the immediate present, but that look forward to provide for the eventualities of the remote future, and who in allying themselves one with the other prepare to lay the foundations of a political edifice destined to constitute a tower of strength for the posterity of both. An alliance such as this, so wide-based and so comprehensive in design, can only exist between two nations that by their geographical position are neighbours so close that any danger from without threatening the one must cause apprehension to the other. It is true that two nations whose frontiers touch too often become involved in broils by reason of border quarrels. When such quarrels occur between two small nations, so much the worse for them; and the evils entailed by such

warfare are of two kinds : not only do these border quarrels engender domestic strife and stir up unneighbourly feelings, producing much bad blood, but these frontier strifes between two kingdoms expose both to the danger of becoming singly the prey of some powerful foe whose intrigues might have been defeated and whose armies might have been resisted had the two nations been true to themselves."

The conditions at which we have here briefly hinted as essential to the formation of a mutually advantageous alliance between two nations, apply in a pre-eminent degree to the relations actually existing between Turkey and Greece. Their geographical proximity, and the internal commerce resulting naturally from this proximity, together with the vast number of Greeks residing in Turkey, and who, as Ottoman subjects, owe allegiance to his Majesty the Sultan, constitute powerful reasons why a close alliance should exist between Turkey and Greece. We speak not of war, we look not forward to such an eventuality; but, scanning with a judicious glance the political relations of all the other European nations, we ask ourselves the question : Were Turkey and Greece firmly banded together, would not such a phalanx present a passive resistance capable of averting disastrous warfare,

and of promoting the great principles of just political peace? Such an alliance would unquestionably point the way to the easiest and best solution of the much-vexed "Eastern Question."

The article just quoted having been well received in Constantinople, I published in a few days after the following :—

"We have already said something touching conditions actually existing, and which point to the wisdom, on the part of both nations, of an alliance between Turkey and Greece. Before that either nation takes the initiative for bringing about such a compact, or takes a forward step to accept the propositions of the other, it is essentially necessary that both should be convinced that the achievement of the object contemplated would tend to their mutual advantage. The formation of national alliances does not necessarily pre-suppose warlike intentions towards those who are not comprised in the compact. On the contrary, as has been well and wisely said, the most certain means to secure peace is to be prepared for war, as it is true that to preserve health we must take precautions against illness.

"Returning to the question before us, we shall briefly

glance at some of the reasons at least why an alliance, offensive and defensive, between Turkey and Greece would promote the interests of both. Greece possesses, relatively to her size, a larger extent of sea-board than any country in Europe. Her deeply-indented coast, notched into bays and harbours, offers unrivalled facilities for commerce, internal and foreign; and commerce, be it remembered, is not alone the great wealth-bringer to nations, but is, next after religion, the great civiliser of humanity. Greece, small as she is, offers to trading vessels, great and little, facilities for traffic superior to those presented by the whole continent of Africa. Little Greece possesses more commodious bays and harbours than does giant Russia, whose huge length occupies the entire north of Europe as well as all the north of Asia. And little Greece, thanks to her genial climate, offers throughout the year, in all her ports, commercial facilities to trading vessels of every size. Such are some of the commercial advantages with which nature has endowed Greece.

“Let us now turn to Turkey, and enumerate some of the wondrous gifts bestowed on her by nature’s bounteous hand. These gifts are conspicuous in her climate, in her soil, and in her geographical position. And with regard to the latter point, is there upon the orbed earth a city placed like the

Turkish capital—wonderful Constantinople? In queenly pre-eminence she sits, three continents within her grasp. Time was when Turkey owned a wider sway over each of these continents than she does to-day. But Constantinople will always be Constantinople, the Koh-i-noor amongst the capitals of the earth. And the master of Constantinople occupies a standpoint, political, geographical, and commercial, only too likely to excite open warfare and underhand political intrigue on the part of the other European Powers.

“True it is that Turkey was at one time not alone able to defend herself, but was actually the terror of Europe. But the Europe of to-day is very unlike the Europe of the years preceding 1453. Turkey has, within the memory of the present generation, been stripped of many a goodly province, and has found that political allies have not hesitated to sacrifice her interests to their own profit. It behoves her then to seek an ally whose interests are identical with hers. The map of Europe shows but one such—and that is Greece. The two separated may be nibbled away by the crafty diplomatic action of powerful foes, but united, Turkey and Greece would be able to present a front that would keep the rest of Europe at bay.”